

1508/1104

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Parish Church of BRADEN,
IN
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE,

On APRIL 19. 1719.

The Third Sunday after EASTER,
AT THE

F U N E R A L
O F

William Ives, Esq;

By ED. COOKE, M. A. Vicar of *Eston*
Neston in the same County, and Chaplain
to the Right Honourable the Lady
LEMPSTER.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N :

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To the Honour'd

Mrs. Ives of Braden.

MADAM,

THIS Sermon, which was
Preach'd by your Ap-
pointment, is now publish'd at
your Request. I am very sen-
sible how inferiour the Chara-
cter I have attempted, is to the
distinguish'd Merit of the Per-
son. But your Goodness will
screen all Faults, and your Patro-
nage will protect from all Cen-
sure. And now if in the Per-
usal of this imperfect Discourse,
you shall find any Consolation,

iv DEDICATION.

nothing will more relieve my uneasie Thoughts on the account of so unequal a Performance, than the Satisfaction of being able to contribute in any Measure to the Comfort of a Lady, whose Felicity I cou'd with might have continued as undisturb'd, as so much acknowledg'd Goodness deserves.

I am, MADAM,

Your most Obedient

A N D

Devoted Servant,

E D. COOKE.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Parish Church of *Braden, &c.*

I T H E S S. iv. 14.

*For if we believe that Jesus died
and rose again ; even so them
also which sleep in Jesus, will
God bring with him.*

IN the Verse immediately preceeding
the Text, the Apostle directs himself
thus to the *Thessalonians* : But I won'd
not have you ignorant, Brethren, con-
cerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow
not, even as others which have no hope.

Here

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Here we may observe, that he does not blame all Sorrow for the Dead, but that which was immoderate and excessive ; and this he imputes entirely to their Ignorance, and for future Prevention, instructs them concerning the Resurrection of Christ, and his coming again in great Majesty and Glory.

Whilst they continued Heathens, they had but very faint and imperfect Notions of the Immortality of the Soul, and none at all of the Resurrection of the Body.

And therefore to prevent their immoderate Sorrow for the Deceas'd, he advances this Consideration, that the Death of the Saints is but a Sleep. *The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God*, and the committing their Bodies to the Grave, is but a solemn Preparation to a future Harvest. After Sleep we know there is an awaking, and that Nature is thereby refresh'd : And so it is with the Faithful in their Death ; their Graves are the Beds wherein they sleep till the Resurrection, and then they shall rise and come forth, never to return to those dark and gloomy Habitations any more. And this the Apostle urges as consolatory and preventive of extreme Sorrow for Friends departed in the Favour of God.

Nature

Nature indeed will incline us to mourn as *Men*, but not to mourn without Hope, as *Christians*; for there is Hope in their Death. Tho' they are gone from us, yet this is not a final Adieu, this is not an eternal Farewel. After the determin'd Time fix'd by the great God of Heaven and Earth, the absolute Lord and Disposer of all Things, they who die, and are resolv'd into the Elements of which they did originally consist, shall awake, and come out of their Beds of Dust; and in all Probability their Christian Friends shall know them, and their meeting together again shall wonderfully contribute to their mutual Felicity: So that it is enough for Heathens, who have no Hope of seeing their Friends more, to be impatient, and mourn out of measure for them, when once gone; but for Christians to express Excess of Sorrow, argues Weakness of Faith. For says the Apostle in the Words of my Text, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.*

It is a Sleep that will give us Rest from our Labours; a Sleep, that tho' it deprives us of the Light of this World, will bring us to the Vision of the Radiant Source and Fountain of all Lights.

He

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He produceth this to prove the Resurrection of the Just. For as sure as Christ Jesus died and rose again, so sure will all true Christians rise and appear with him in Glory. Christ Jesus underwent Death with all its Terrors, that it might be a calm Sleep and Repose to his People. And they enjoy as perfect and compleat rest upon their Beds of Dust as upon the softest Down. Believers die in peace. The first Martyr, Saint *Stephen*, in the midst of a Shower of Stones, fell a sleep, as the inspir'd Evangelist with great Elegance expresses it. Being reconcil'd to God thro' the precious Blood of Christ, they are not at all alarm'd at his call, but with the utmost Tranquility resign their Spirits into his Hands, and often are impatient for the joyful Summons, having no business to detain them here, and no great matter to invite their stay. And being born up with strong and lively hopes of a Glorious Inheritance ; They cry out with good old *Simeon*, *Lord now let thy Servants depart in peace, for our Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*

There is a vast disproportion between the Death of the Righteous and of the Wicked. The Death of the Saints is precious in the Sight of God : Their Bodies are kept in the Bosom

Bosom of the Earth, to be raised in Glory And on the other Hand, the Death of the Wicked is accursed : Their Bodies shall indeed be re-united unto their Souls, but to their Eternal Confusion and Misery. They that have been Companions in *Pleasure*, shall be likewise so in *Pain*. Their Resurrection shall be effected, by the Infinite Power of GOD, as their tremendous Judge, when as the Resurrection of the Just shall proceed from Christ, as their glorious Head and gracious Redeemer.

And this is what I shall endeavour to make out, in treating of my Text in the ensuing Order.

1. I will show who they are that may be said *to sleep in Jesus*.
2. I will show how such Persons are assured of their rising to Life again.

And 1st. I will show who they are, that may be said *to sleep in Jesus*.

This is of infinite Moment to know, both for the awakening of the Secure, who vainly presume upon their Interest, in the Salvation of the Gospel, and for the Confirming and Encouraging of the Saints. Now we have an infallible Rule of Tryal declared by

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St. John; *He that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life.* All the excellent and comfortable Benefits procured by our Saviour, are communicated only to those that are united unto him.

There is no Condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus, vitally as their Head, from whom are deriv'd all Spiritual Influences. And such are describ'd by this infallible Character, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. The Blessedness after Death, which is assured by a Voice from Heaven, is with this precise Restriction, exclusive of all other, *Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord.* The glorious Resurrection at the last Day, when the Bodies of the Saints which now rest in Hope, shall become Incorruptible and Immortal, is the happy Effect and Consequence of Union with Christ. Thus the Apostle declares, *As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* As all that were naturally in and from Adam, the Corrupt Fountain of Mankind, are under the Sentence of Death, so all that are in Christ, the Head of the Regenerate, shall partake of his Blessed Life.

Now the Bond of this Union to Christ is the Holy Spirit, which is the inward powerful Principle of Holiness and new Obedience
in

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in all true Believers. He that is joyn'd to the Lord is one Spirit, that is, by the Spirit of Sanctification and Holiness has a real Participation of his Life. So that the same Mind that was in Christ Jesus, is, tho' not in so pure and perfect a manner, in all Sincere Christians. As his Conversation was, so is theirs in an inferior Degree in this World. Renew'd Christians are said to be in the Spirit, being by that illuminated, enclin'd and enabled to do God's will. And the Spirit of God is said to dwell in them by his peculiar and eminent Operations. As the Spirit of Truth to enlighten the Understanding with saving Knowledge, to see the Reality and Excellency of Supernatural Things, the great Mysteries of God and Eternal Glory; and as the Spirit of Holiness, to inspire the Soul with Divine and Unutterable Desires after the Favour and Grace of God.

And now from what has been said, we may clearly judge whether or no we have an Interest in Christ and his Benefits. For the Apostle plainly tells us that *if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.* Rom. 8. 9. But those who have Communion with Christ by his Spirit, have a Share in his Victories, and may with Confidence expect to sleep in him. *For we are assured that if*

the Spirit of him that rais'd up Jesus from the dead, dwell in us, he that rais'd up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by the Spirit that dwelleth in us. Rom. 8. 11. But those that never felt the sanctifying Efficacy of the Spirit in their Hearts and Lives, tho' they may be Christians in Appearance and outward Profession, yet they have really no other Union with Christ, than a dead Branch with a Tree, that receives no Sap and Virtue from it. And indeed a Communion and Fellowship with such an infinitely pure Spirit, are such things as a carnal Eye cannot see, nor a carnal Judgement value. Who ever is in Christ is a New Creature, And only those who partake in the first Resurrection, that is, the Spiritual Resurrection of the Soul from the Graves of Sin, shall be exempted from the Power of the Second Death. And thus you may see who they are *that shall sleep in Jesus.*

I come now in the Second place, to show how such Persons are assured of their rising to Life again.

They who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

And

And 1st. they are assur'd of this from the Death of Christ. *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* Christ Jesus has for all those that believe in him conquer'd Sin, Satan, and Death. These are the three mighty and confounding Enemies of Mankind. Sin first introduc'd Death, and all its preceeding Calamities into the World. And when Man had renounc'd his Creator and Natural Lord, he was judicially given up to Satan, as the Executioner of Divine Vengeance, and to Death the King of Terrors. Now the Son of God came from his Throne in Heaven to deliver us: His Death was the full Price of our Liberty, and of our Salvation. Such was the Greatness of his sufferings, in which the highest Degree of Obedience, and the lowest of Humility were conspicuous, as to be a valuable Compensation to obtain Eternal Redemption for us. Now when God the Supreme Judge is satisfied, Satan forfeits the Right he had to torment us. For Christ having spoil'd Principalities and Powers, made a Show of them openly, triumphing over them. Our Saviour died victoriously. The Tree of Infamy on which he suffer'd, was the Trophy of his Conquest. His
Death

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Death disarm'd Satan of his Weapons, wherewith he subdued us, and thus vanquish'd the Destroyer.

And as by the Death of our Blessed Redeemer we are deliver'd from the Tyranny of Satan, so are we from Death as a Curse. The Curse is remov'd. Death consider'd as the Wages of Sin, is all Sting and Poison. *The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law.* Thus Death, besides its Natural Terror, is attended with a most amazing Horror, by being arm'd with Sin, and strengthen'd by the Law. Now our Saviour having in our Stead subjected himself to Death, the Penalty of the Law for Sin, there is no Condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. The Lord laid on him the Iniquities of us all. He bore the great Load of our Transgressions; and not of ours only, but of all likewise that partake of that Nature in which he suffer'd: And thus we are assur'd, that those *which sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him* from the Consideration of Christ's Death.

The Grave being not able to bind him, shall consequently not be able to tye us down any longer, than his Divine Power shall

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shall begin to call us out of the Dust ; when we shall hear his Voice and come forth, without any Opposition or Resistance.

But, *2dly*, We are assur'd of this from Christ's Resurrection. As our Surety, he was under the Arrests of Death. It becoming the Holy Majesty of God, and conducing to the Ends of his OEconomy and Government of the World, not to derogate from the Dignity of his Laws, but to lay the Penalty on his Son, who interpos'd for us. Now having finish'd the Work of our Redemption by his Sufferings, his Resurrection was the Reward of his Passion. And hereby his Innocency was vindicated, for he was reputed, and suffer'd too as a Malefactor ; and herein God's Justice was also declar'd to be satisfied. Wherefore the Apostle says, *That he died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification*. Having paid our Debt, he was releas'd from the Grave, and his Discharge was most publicly manifested to the World.

Thus by his Death and Resurrection he has pluckt out the Sting of Death, and broken the Strength of Sin, the Law ; prevail'd over the Gates of Hell, spoil'd and bound the Prince of Darknes, and broke
in

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in sunder the Bars of the Grave. The Grave is now become only a Place of soft Repose, which receives us into its Bosom for a Time, but must deliver us up at the great Day of Retribution: When an Universal Earthquake shall shake the Tombs, and unlock all the Repositories of Nature. When this crumbled Dust of ours, that has been blended and confounded with the common Earth, and dispers'd over the whole Face thereof, and subjected to all the Revolutions of Nature, shall be recollected by that Infinite Wisdom that knows where all the scatter'd Parts of our Bodies lie, and by that Infinite Power that can rally them, and make every Atome of our divided Ashes stand up in its Place whenever he shall call.

And what can be greater Matter of Wonder and Amazement, than that the Son of God, who originally possess'd Immortality, shou'd divest himself of so much Splendor, and submit to our lowest Infirmities, to most exquisite and unparellel'd Sufferings, and at last, to a most barbarous and ignominious Death.

Now the Resurrection of Christ is the Argument and Claim of our happy Resurrection; for God chose him, and appointed him
him

him to be the Example and Principle, from whom all Divine Blessings are deriv'd unto us. Accordingly he tells his Disciples, *Because I live, ye shall live also.* Our Nature was rais'd in his Person, and in our Nature all Believers; wherefore he is called the *First Fruits of them that sleep*: Because as the first Fruits were a Pledge, and an Assurance of the following Harvest; and as from the first Fruits being offer'd unto God, the whole Harvest was entitled to Consecration; so our Saviour's Resurrection to a Life of Glory is the Earnest and Assurance of ours. He is call'd the *First Born* among the Dead, and owns the whole Race of departed Believers as his Brethren, who shall be restor'd to Life according to his Pattern. He is the Head, Believers are his Members, and therefore shall have Communion with him in his Life. And thus they are said to be rais'd up together, and made to sit in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus. His Resurrection was Victorious and triumphant; and is it therefore conceivable that he should leave the Saints, his own, by so many dear Titles, under the Power of Death? If *Moses*, the Deliverer of *Israel* from the Tyranny of *Pharoah*, would not offer any thing of theirs, not an Hoof to

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remain

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remain in the House of Bondage, as you have it, *Exodus* x. 16. Will our Great Redeemer, the mighty Champion and Captain of our Salvation be less perfect in his Work? Shall our last Enemy always detain his Spoils, our Bodies in the Grave? This wou'd reflect upon his Love and Power. It is recorded how early his Power was display'd in forcing the Grave to release its imprison'd Captives. *And many Bodies of Saints which slept, arose, and came out of their Graves after his Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appear'd unto many.* *St. Matth.* xxvii. 52, 53. What better Earnest can we have, that the Strength of Death is broken? From what has been done to what he can do, the Inference is very clear. The Apostle tells us, *he will raise our vile Bodies, and change them like unto his glorious Body, by that Power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.* Our Redemption will then be compleat, and all the Bitterness of Death past. The Redemption of the Soul is accomplish'd from Sin and Misery immediately after Death, but the Redemption of our Bodies, is the last in order to crown our Felicity at the last Day: then Death shall be swallow'd up in Victory, and abolish'd for ever. Then shall there

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there be the most glorious Appearance of all those *which sleep in Jesus, whom God will bring with him.* What an admirable Sight will it be, that the Saints of all Ages shall at once arise glorified and immortaliz'd to attend upon our Saviour in the last Act of his Regal Office, and then to make a triumphant Entry with him into Heaven. Tho' it may be long to the General Resurrection at the last Day, and yet perhaps sooner than any of us here are well aware of; yet it shall be with *them that sleep in Jesus,* as it is with them that awake out of a quiet natural Sleep, to whom the longest Night seems but as a Moment. So when the Saints awake from Death in the great Morning of the World, a thousand Years will seem no more to them than as one single Day.

And then shall the Hand of Death draw the Curtain of the great Tabernacle, and let us in to see God Face to Face, in that Palace of inestimable Majesty, where we shall have the strong Rays of his Glory beat full upon us, and be our selves strong enough to bear them. When God shall be eternally smiling upon us, and we eternally warm'd and chear'd with the Divine Presence; then shall these Bodies of ours, which shall be sown in Weakness, be rais'd in Power,

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which shall be sown in Dishonour be rais'd in Glory. And tho' now but frail and brittle, tho' now but dull, heavy and unweildy Burdens, become impassible as Angels, subtile as a Ray of Light, bright as the Sun, and nimble as the Wings of Lightning.

There is a most Solemn and Majestick Passage in the *Revelation*, in which St. *John* confirms the real and positive Blessedness of those that die in the Lord. *I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying, write, from henceforth blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.* Thus the Recompence of their Works and Labour and Service, is Life and Immortality, the Crown of Righteousness, and the Weight of Glory.

Awake therefore, and sing ye that dwell in the Dust, ye that are gone down into the Land of Oblivion, for you shall see your Redeemer stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

And let us that yet remain, whilst we Live and dwell upon the Faith and Hope of the same Blessed Immortality, glorifie God for all those excellent Persons, that now return'd to Dust, out of which they were taken,

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taken, are gone down into Silence and are *a Sleep in Jesus*. Such as have been in their several Generations the Salt of the Earth, to preserve Mankind from degeneracy and Corruption. All those Shining instances and examples of Piety that have been the Lights and Ornaments of their several Ages, and have left a bright Tract behind them to direct their Followers to the Place whether they are gone before.

Let us then *praise famous Men, them that have left a Name behind them, that their Praises might be reported, Such as were honour'd in their Generations, and were the Glory of their Times. Their Bodies are buried in Peace, but their Name liveth for evermore.*

And amongst these let us now praise one, *who was distinguish'd among the Rich, furnish'd with ability, and living peaceably in his Habitations.* One, whose many worthy Qualities have plac'd him in the highest Esteem amongst the Men of this Generation, and will preserve his Memory grateful and precious to future Ages. One, of whose Worth and Excellency you have been longer witnesses and are better Judges. One, whose Life run on as regular as the Sun. For as a wise Steward, he was Just and Frugal in the OEconomy of
his

his Time. And in every Stage of Life had his Accounts ready, and had nothing else to do, but to trim his Lamp, refresh his Virtues and compose him self for Heaven. For he ever proportion'd his Care to the real Worth of Things ; trampled upon those little Projects of Profit and Pleasure, which so ensnare and enslave the generality of Mankind, and despis'd Honour, that great Idol, to which the Men of this World bow. His Spirit breath'd in too free and open an Air, to be caught with the Charms of either. He had a Soul too great to stoop to any little and unjust Condescensions, but declin'd and turn'd them off with a Generous Scorn : Having ever acted according to that noble and magnanimous Resolution of Holy *Job*. *Job*. 27. 5,6. *Till I die I will not remove my Integrity from me, my Righteousness I hold fast, and I will not let it go, my Heart shall not reproach me so long as I Live.* For he was a Man of strict and known Probity, of a firm and Compos'd Resolution, a Chearful Heart, and an innocent Conscience ; of good Principles without Violence and Fury, and of a good Life without Artifice or Ostentation.

Having a Steady and Sober Experience of humane Things, he had taken off his Affections from the World, and was above the
impertinent

impertinent Concerns of Life. Sat loose to all its perishing Enjoyments, and postpon'd every thing to the principal End of his Being. Having read Men as well as Books, and been conversant with Greatness as well as Privacy, he join'd to his Study and Speculation a just Knowledge of the World and of humane Affairs, that is, to know there is no good in them.

The Entertainments of Reason were his chiefest Pleasures, and the Study of polite Letters, and of all the Arts of Humanity his principal Entertainment and Delight.

That Time, which Alas! too great a part of the World consume in empty Joys and trifling Amusements, the mean and insipid Diversions of Life, he employ'd in the attainment of Learned Sciences, and all Honourable Accomplishments.

He had a great Solidity of Judgement and a most Logical Ratiocination. An extensive Knowledge, and a vast Ambition still to improve that Knowledge, tho' he was scarce Ignorant of any Thing. With what fineness of Reason, and with what Beauty of Style have we often heard him Argue the Cause of the Injur'd and of the Oppress'd? No Man ever spoke more Neatly, or more Weightily. Could I, like him, tho' in a
much

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much inferior degree, but thus excell, then might I hope to be Just in the Praises of Distinguish'd Worth, and to proportion this Commemoration of so Famous a Man to the Quality and Merit of the Person.

The Remembrance of him is like the Composition of a Perfume, that fills all around it with a charming Sweetness, and delicious Fragrancy.

As he abounded in secular Advantages, so did he employ them in the best Service, that of his God and that of his Country. And this upon Motives truly Christian, more *in love of the Praise of God, than of the Praises of Men*; more in pursuit of a good Name, than of a great one.

He was Just and Generous in all his Actions: And the Good he did was always upon Noble Views and Honourable Motives. Nor was it more Remarkable for the Substance and Matter of it, than for the Sincere intention, and unaffected manner of doing it, than for the Heartiness, Candor and Humanity of it.

As his Possessions were Great, his Dispositions were Good.

He was furnish'd with all those Habits and Graces that perfect the Soul, With the Ornaments

naments and Virtues of Hospitality, Generosity, and Charity.

Such a Benignity of Temper, that tho' he was often under the Obligations of Justice to Punish according unto Law; yet he had the Disposition of a Christian to Pardon according to the Gospel.

Nor was he less tender and compassionate to all that were really in Want or Distress. Looking upon his Indigent Neighbour as another Self, only a different Garb of Circumstances. Knowing also that He, of whom we every Day ask our Bread, made use of the Beggars hand to ask it of him.

And this he did in the best Method of Relief imaginable. Not by that Popular and Ostentatious way of Feeding the Idle at his Gates, which none but the Mob can commend, but by a way, that at once did answer both the present Necessities and future Wants of those about him. And that was by projecting continually such Costly and Expensive Designs of Ornament and Beauty towards the Improvement of this his Beloved and Delightful Seat, as whereby every one in his Neighbourhood that had need and necessity, Labouring with their own Hands the thing that is good, might still at his Charge eat their own Bread, and not the Bread of Idleness or

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Deceit,

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Deceit. And certainly the best Method of Relieving, is that of Employing the Poor.

But we have still a nobler Instance of his Tenderness and Compassion express'd in a due Regard for the Honour of God, and a Zeal for his Worship and Service ; *In setting up the House of his God, and in repairing the Desolations thereof: For when he thought upon her Stones, it pitied him to see her in the Dust.* Behold then this little Sanctuary now form'd into a decent Fabrick, firm on its Foundations, and compacted in its Superstructure, giving ample Testimony of his Gratitude for God's Bounty and Zeal for his Glory.

To conclude: In him we have lost at once One of the most natural and improv'd Abilities, One of the most-useful Conversation, and One of the most faithful Friendship ; his most excellent Lady a very tender and affectionate Husband ; his Servants a good Master, the Poor a true Advocate and Patron, and the Rich, a most generous and hospitable Neighbour. In him at once Learning and Learned Men have been depriv'd of a great Encouragement and Support, and his, I own, Honourable Profession, of a bright Ornament ; his Country of a true Friend, as in all Relations

tions and Circumstances ; so more especially, as to a most impartial and Unbyass'd Distribution of Justice ; and the World of a shining Example of Probity and Honesty, of Worth and Honour.

And now as the Evils and Afflictions of this Life are design'd by God as Tryals of Mens Virtues, how well did he acquit himself therein, and bear up against them with a Constancy superior to them ; and at last submit to the Stroke of Death with a Dignity of Mind, truly Christian ? Thus as he enjoy'd *modestly*, he suffer'd *meekly*. And we humbly trust has entitled himself to the Reward of Virtue, the Happiness of Heaven, to a Life Immortal, to Honours Un-speakable, and to Joys full of Glory.

F I N I S.

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